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APPLICANT: GWEN, Patrick

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TITLE: CASE FOR RETAINING A TOOTHBRUSH AND OTHER DENTAL CLEANING TOOLS THEREIN

Amendment A: SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

On pages 1 - 2, paragraph [0002], revise as follows:

A variety of implements can be used for ~~the~~ cleaning ~~of~~ the mouth. Conventionally, toothbrushes are used for the specific cleaning of the teeth. Toothbrushes are often used in association with toothpaste so as to assure clean teeth and to prevent dental decay. Toothbrushes are usually individually packaged and used as an individual item. During transport, the toothbrushes are often carried separately in a shaving kit, or accessory bag, so as to be available for individual use when desired. In many circumstances, these individual toothbrushes become lost or misplaced during transport. Additionally, the toothbrushes often have an extended length that make them rather inconvenient for pocket transport. Additionally, and furthermore, even if an individual would choose to transport such toothbrushes in his or her pocket, the moisture associated with the bristles would often be transferred onto clothing. As such, a carrying case would also be required.

On pages 2 - 3, paragraph [0005], revise as follows:

In other circumstances, various types of toothpicks are often used for the purpose cleaning the interstices between the teeth. It has been known that it is important to prevent gum disease. ~~which affects~~ Gum disease is known to affect the integrity of the teeth. As such, various types of toothpicks and dental floss have been developed so as to clean these interstices between the teeth. ~~Food particles can be removed which would otherwise be inaccessible by the toothbrushes.~~ Toothpicks, have a wide variety of configurations and shapes. Some toothpicks are designed to be directly introduced into the spaces between the teeth. Other toothpicks are designed so as to dig into the gums adjacent the roots of the teeth. Using these specially configured picks, food particles can be removed which would otherwise be inaccessible by the toothbrushes.

On page 4, paragraph [0010], revise as follows:

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a dental tool apparatus which allows the dental tools to be moved between a stowed position to a ~~portion~~ position ready for use.

On page 4, paragraph [0013], revise as follows:

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a dental tool apparatus which is easy to use and relatively inexpensive.

Revise paragraph [0025] as follows:

Referring to FIGURE 1, there is shown the dental tool apparatus 10 in accordance with the preferred embodiment of the present invention. The dental tool apparatus 10 includes a case 12 and a first cleaning tool 14 pivotally mounted about axis 16 extending transversely across the case 12. The first cleaning tool 14 is a toothbrush ~~18~~ having bristles 20 at an end thereof opposite the pivotal connection 16. The bristles 20 are illustrated as extending outwardly from the handle 22 of the toothbrush ~~18~~ in an orientation transverse to the longitudinal axis of the case 12. The bristles 20 will also have a length which is less than the width of the opening 24 of the case 12. A closure member 26 has a pivotal connection 28 at an end of the case 12 opposite the pivotal connection 16. The closure member 26 is illustrated in FIGURE 1 in its open position. The closure member 26, as will be described hereinafter, can pivot about the pivotal connection so as to lower into a closed position.

Revise paragraph [0026] as follows:

The case 12 has a first side 30 and a second side 32 which define the opening 24 therebetween. The distance between the sides 30 and 32 should be sufficient so as to allow the first cleaning tool 14, a second cleaning tool 34 and a third cleaning tool 36 to be retained therein. As will be described hereinafter, the distance between the bristles 20 of the toothbrush ~~18~~ and the pivotal connection 16 will define a space within the interior of the case 12 into which the toothpick 34 and the interdental brush 36 can be retained. The toothpick 34 and the interdental brush 36 are each coaxially pivotally mounted about pivotal connection 16 adjacent an end 38 of the case 12. The pivotal connection 28 is adjacent to the opposite end 40 of the case 12. The backside 42 of the case 12 will be suitably closed across the space between the sides 30 and 32.

Revise paragraph [0028] as follows:

In FIGURE 1, it can be seen that the first cleaning tool 14 is a toothbrush ~~18~~. The toothbrush has one end that is pivotally connected to the pivotal connection 16. The pivotal connection 16 is in the form of an axle extending between the sides 30 and 32 of the case 12. Handle 22 extends outwardly from the pivotal connection 16 so as to support the bristles 20 therefrom. The bristles 20 face from the surface of the handle 22 toward the side 32 of case 12. The toothbrush ~~18~~, along with the bristles 20, can be formed through an injection molding process.

Revise paragraph [0032] as follows:

FIGURE 3 illustrates each of the cleaning tools 14, 34 and 36 as in the stowed position between the sides 30 and 32 of case 12. In particular, it can be seen that the toothbrush ~~18~~ is stowed

so as to have the handle 22 positioned adjacent to the side 30. The bristles 20 are illustrated as extending outwardly from the end of handle 22 opposite the pivotal connection. The bristles 20 are also illustrated as extending transversely to the longitudinal axis of the case 12. The space 70 between the bristles 20 and the pivotal connection 16 is an area by which the second cleaning tool 34 and the third cleaning tool 36 can be stowed. As such, the particular design of the present invention facilitates the ability to install other cleaning tools within the interior of case 12.

Revise paragraph [0034] as follows:

FIGURE 4 shows the toothbrush ~~18~~ of the first cleaning tool 14 in its outwardly deployed position. Importantly, the mechanisms of the present invention serve to support the toothbrush ~~18~~ in its outwardly deployed position. Additionally, the structures of the present invention serve to prevent the forces that are applied to the toothbrush during brushing from destroying the case 12 or the pivotal connection 16 between the toothbrush ~~18~~ and the case 12. In particular, in FIGURE 4, the closure member 26 is illustrated in its covering position. The closure member 26 has surface 46 engaged within a notch 74 formed on the axle engaging surface 76 of toothbrush ~~18~~. A flap 78 is in abutment with the surface 46 of closure member 26. The lever member 60 of the toothbrush ~~18~~ is in surface-to-surface contact with an abutment member 80 extending between the sides 30 and 32 of the case 12. As a result of this orientation, the toothbrush ~~18~~ will be fixedly and securely retained in an outwardly extending position. The various mechanisms serve to distribute the forces appropriately so as to avoid damage to the case 12 or the pivotal connection 16 during brushing activities. The torque forces that are applied to the toothbrush ~~18~~ during brushing activities will be distributed to the surfaces between the flap 60 and the abutment member 80, between the notch 74 and the surface 46, and between the surface 46 and the flap 78.

Revise paragraph [0036] as follows:

FIGURE 6 illustrates the second cleaning tool 34 extending in its deployed position outwardly of the case 12. Once again, the closure member 26 is illustrated in its covering position and is rotated about the pivotal connection 28. The surface 46 is engaged with a notch 90 formed on the bearing surface 92 of the toothpick 34. The lever member ~~64~~ 62 is illustrated as in abutment with the abutment surface 80. The shank 50 of the toothpick 34 has a surface in surface-to-surface contact with the surface 46 of closure member 26. As such, any forces applied to the toothpick 34 will be distributed over a variety of surfaces, similar to that described in association with the first cleaning tool 14 and the third cleaning tool 36.